

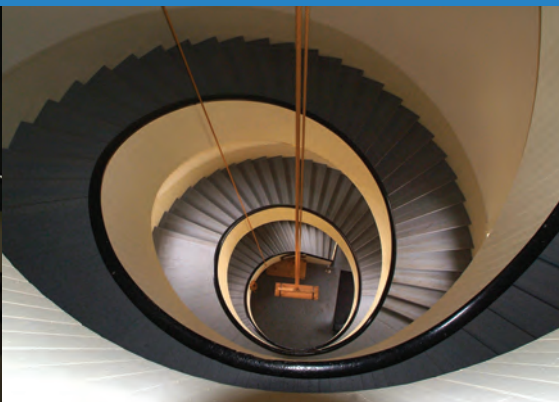
2015 - A Year in Review



SPRINGFIELD ARMORY

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

2015

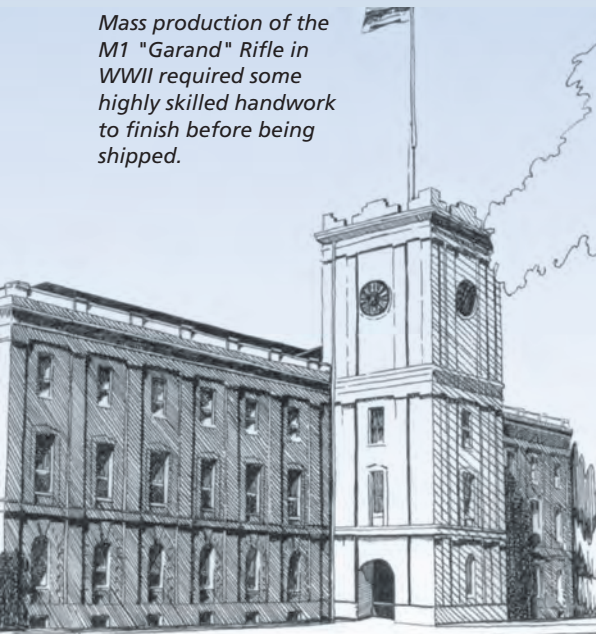


Significance of the Springfield Armory

For 174 years, the men and women of Springfield Armory shaped America's destiny through pioneering technological innovation, improved manufacturing processes, and increased use of labor-saving machines. Today, Springfield Armory National Historic Site preserves and interprets this colorful history in original buildings on their historic grounds through museum displays, public programs, notable collections, activities, and internet resources.



Mass production of the M1 "Garand" Rifle in WWII required some highly skilled handwork to finish before being shipped.



Springfield Armory workers raised so much money in WWII during war bond drives that two B17 heavy bombers were named for the Armory in a ceremony at nearby Westover Air Base.

History

Springfield Armory exerted a profound influence over the City of Springfield and on the Nation. It carried out small-arms manufacturing, storage, repair, testing and development functions assigned by the United States Army. In doing so it stimulated technological innovation, encouraged improved manufacturing processes and fostered increased use of labor-saving machines. All of this had a lasting impact on American industry.



The availability of Springfield Armory weapons influenced battlefield tactics and wartime strategy in every armed conflict of the Nation. Armory inventions and industrial processes, adopted by the private sector in the 19th and 20th centuries, revolutionized the manufacture of consumer products and provided a major catalyst for American industrialization. Highly skilled workers attracted to the Armory became a major reason for the City of

Springfield's rapid growth in a region that came to be known as "The Precision Corridor" for its many advanced industries.

Springfield Armory National Historic Site

Today, the National Park Service (NPS) manages a twenty-acre portion of the National Historic Site. The remainder is owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, home to Springfield Technical Community College (STCC). They work together as legislated partners to manage the site as a whole, making for a very dynamic and bustling urban park. Here is the Benton Small Arms Collection, one of the world's largest historic firearm collections which, along with historic structures and landscapes, form the core of the cultural and natural resources preserved and interpreted for public benefit.



Website: www.nps.gov/spar

Social Media: facebook.com/SPARNHS twitter.com/SPARNHS

Cover Photo (bottom center): Jim Langone, Springfield, MA

Springfield Armory Alliance

The mission of the Springfield Armory Alliance has a broad three-fold focus – to restore the best of the past, to assist programs of the present, and to fund projects for the future.

The Past: The Board is proud of this year's significant accomplishment in reaching its fundraising goal for restoration of the four clocks and bells atop the 165 year old museum tower. This achievement was made possible with teamwork from Smith & Wesson Corporation and Big Y Foods, numerous Alliance members, and many families and individuals throughout Greater Springfield.

The Present: Keeping the Alliance busy have been numerous smaller projects; i.e. Giant Tag Sale (historic books and military ephemera), Armory Day (cultural events), new exhibit openings (Steampunk, The Armory Goes to the Movies), and "Over Here, Over There, Letters from the Great War" (video production tribute to WWI).

The Future: The major project for the upcoming year is reestablishment of Springfield Armory's distinctive landscape of approximately eight decades ago. The historic Rose Gardens will become the glorious focal point on the Armory property. The Alliance will assist in the Armory's goal to reestablish the gardens so that visitors may enjoy this natural and tranquil site.



Historic Gardens at the Springfield Armory about 1950s

The Board of the Alliance looks forward to continuing its relationship with Springfield Armory. We welcome you to become an Alliance member. For information call 413-271-3982 and follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/springfieldarmoryalliance/>.

MISSION

The mission of the Springfield Armory Alliance, Inc., a non-profit agency "friends group," is to support Springfield Armory NHS in numerous exciting activities. Key efforts of the Alliance will be to support historic preservation, advocacy, education, and promotion.

Please consider supporting the Springfield Armory Alliance and become a member. Five membership levels range from \$15 to \$250 for individuals and families. There are also several exciting projects underway and volunteers are needed. For further information please call 413-271-3982 or email: armoryalliance@gmail.com. Thank you.



Mayor Sarno celebrates the clock dedication.

Springfield Armory Alliance Board and NPS Staff (below left to right): Roy Jinks, Jim Controvich, Melvin Edwards, Gavin Gardner, Wayne Phaneuf, James Woolsey, Joanne Gangi-Wellman, Jesse Lederman, Shera Cohen and Arlene Rodriguez



Infrastructure Projects



The Jr. Officer's Quarters in 1920. The current project will restore the front porch and repair the windows, among many other improvements to the buildings exterior.

Over the past few years the Springfield Armory National Historic Site has been working to get a number of major improvements rolling. 2015 saw the historic clock fixed with help from the park's Friends Group, and the exciting beginning of a major project to repair the exterior of Quarters 5 and 6. When constructed in 1870, this building acted as Jr. Officer's Quarters for Armory employees. Years of neglect have left the beautiful building in poor condition. Working in partnership with the State of Massachusetts' Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) and Springfield Technical Community College, National Park Service historic preservation experts are currently completing a 13 month project to, among other things, restore the porch, repoint missing mortar, repair the roof, and refinish and repaint the building's windows. Just look at the difference between the before and after photos of the inside of the house!

Looking ahead to FY16, an incredible amount of infrastructure projects are scheduled including work on the windows and roof of the Main Arsenal, a project to repair the porch on the Commandant's House, and a project to restore the landscape's natural contour. This project will remove introduced fill dirt that was used to level off the hillside to create athletic fields behind the Main Arsenal in the 1970s. The project will be completed in conjunction with a Federal Highways project to repave all of the roadways within the park. FY16 is shaping up to be a busy, but very exciting, year at the Springfield Armory!

Before After



These photos show just how quickly improvements are being made. Years of neglect have left the interior of Quarters 5/6 a mess. With a little elbow grease, the design of the house starts to shine through. It would have been an amazing home in its prime!



Currently, National Park Service preservationists are working to restore the front porch.



Preserving and Exhibiting Cultural Resources

Three new exhibits were on public view over the year, which brought many objects out of storage for display alongside items loaned from a variety of sources.

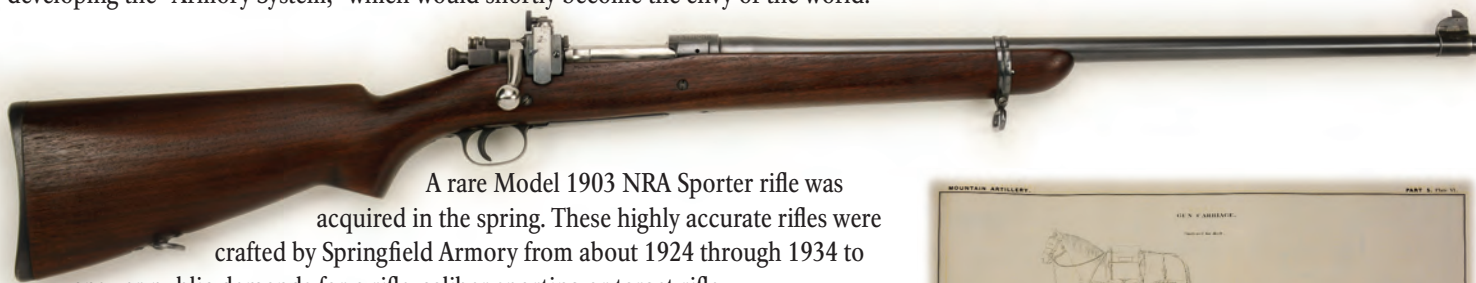
From January through April, "Arsenals Under Attack" compared the 1787 raid on Springfield Arsenal by Daniel Shays with the 1859 raid on Harpers Ferry Armory by John Brown.

May through October featured "Springfield Armory Goes to Hollywood." This exhibit highlighted firearms that were originally made at Springfield Armory and had a second life on major movie productions, some of which were loaned from Hollywood prop shops. These props were used in movies such as Jaws (1975), The Alamo (2001), Captain Blood (1935), The Wind and the Lion (1975), Road to Perdition (2002), and Beau Geste (1939).

The newest exhibit is called "At Camp in the Field: The Common Soldier in America's Civil War". The display is composed almost entirely from seldom seen Civil War objects from the Springfield Armory collection. The exhibit includes a frock coat that was cleaned and conserved through the great efforts of the NPS textile conservation lab; one of approximately 100 items recently conserved. This frock was issued to Philander Streeter when he enlisted in the 2nd Vermont Infantry at the beginning of the Civil War. He was wearing it when he was captured at the First Battle of Bull Run in 1861, and likely wore it when he was held at Libby Prison in Richmond. The exhibit will run through April, 2016.

Additionally, the museum collection has grown over the year with some exciting acquisitions.

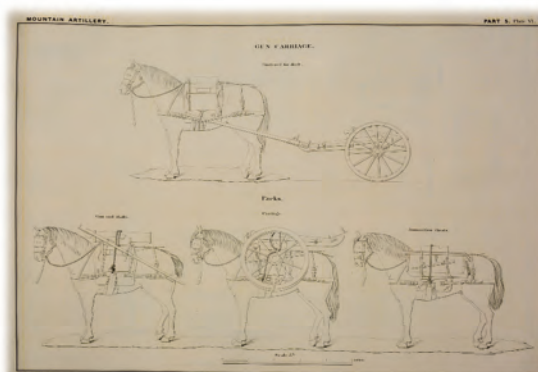
A rare eprouvette was recently acquired. The eprouvette, made at Springfield Armory in 1820, was used to test batches of gunpowder for consistency at the very beginnings of standardization in measurement at the Armory. It marked an important step in developing the "Armory System," which would shortly become the envy of the world.



A rare Model 1903 NRA Sporter rifle was acquired in the spring. These highly accurate rifles were crafted by Springfield Armory from about 1924 through 1934 to answer public demands for a rifle-caliber sporting or target rifle.

Harold Lee Davenport donated some wonderful items. Davenport was commissioned as an Ordnance Lieutenant in 1917, and served through World War I as an assistant works manager. This donation includes Davenport's original dress uniform, sword (which was made at Springfield Armory), World War I memorabilia, original papers and photographs.

A recently conserved rare book of plates from 1848, entitled "Artillery for the United States Land Service." It is bound with a National Armory cover indicating it was for use by Springfield Armory and was an early part of its library.



Serving our Visitors

Visitor Services performance in 2015 can be described in one word: strong. Strong program development and special events helped raise our attendance by 6%. We also saw visitation grow by 5% in 2014. There were many memorable and varied events; Armory Day, performances by military bands, our annual Big Band concert that commemorates the 1943 visit by the Benny Goodman Orchestra, Raptor programs, walking tours of the historic grounds, blank firing demonstrations – our Rangers continue to inspire audiences.

For the first time management decided to close the museum to the public on Mondays and Tuesdays from November 1st until Memorial Day in order to serve the educational community. This decision paid off immensely with an increase in curriculum based education programs by 89%! This accomplishment was the result of two years' worth of collaboration with staff, volunteers and educators. Park Rangers fulfilled education goals and, at the same time immersed students in the rich history of the Springfield Armory.

2015 marked the 12th year that the NPS Parks participated in a booth at the Big E. The Big E is the fifth largest fair in the country and the largest fair in the Northeast. This year we shared a booth in the Massachusetts' Building with Massachusetts State Park Rangers and Volunteers. Visitors were now able to get information from our Federal and State Parks in one stop. The interaction between Rangers and visitors was enjoyed immensely, as was the ability for Park Rangers to inform the public of the historical and natural resources available in the many parks in Massachusetts.



Massachusetts State Parks and the National Park Service greeted thousands of visitors at the Big E.



Chief of Interpretation Joanne Gangi-Wellman and Mayor Domenic Sarno at the Big Band Concert.



Visiting NPS Rangers assisting during Armory Day.



Ranger Susan Ashman was awarded the Howdy Award by the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Howdy Award celebrates Excellence in Service in the Pioneer Valley for Hospitality.



Springfield Armory Volunteers in Parks



Volunteerism is alive and strong at the Springfield Armory. Over the past year, 132 volunteers contributed 4,466 hours to the Springfield Armory. The success of the Springfield Armory National

Historic Site has been in part due to the tremendous support of volunteers.

Volunteers helped staff the Visitor Center and the National Park Service booth at the Eastern States Exposition (Big E), delivered presentations for the newly authorized Coltsville National Historical Park, and supported special events such as Armory Day. Others volunteered in building and grounds maintenance or in support of the park's world-renowned archives and firearms collection.

Three Springfield Armory volunteers (Eleanor Labine, Roger Johnson and Austin Sawicki) became Master Rangers during the year and now may wear the Master Ranger Patches. Of particular note was the completion of the Volunteer Handbook to assist VIPs in supporting the important mission of the Springfield Armory National Historic Site.

If you want to volunteer, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Joanne Gangi-Wellman at (413) 734-8551 .



Legacy in Print

The spring marked the release of the book "Images of America: Springfield Armory," by Alex MacKenzie, Curator at Springfield Armory NHS. The book features over 200 images from Springfield Armory's archive and offers a quick history of the site from its beginnings in 1777 to its end in 1968. Proceeds from the book will go to Springfield Armory Alliance and will be used to support the park.

Eastern National, a non-profit organization that manages the book store, republished the book "Springfield Armory – Pointless Sacrifice", by C. L Dvarecka. Mr. Dvarecka was the Information Officer and Historical Officer for the Springfield Armory from 1954 until it's closing in 1968.

Both of these books are available in the bookstore.



Coming in 2016

Coltville National Historical Park



We will soon have a new National Park in the area. In December, 2014, Congress passed, and the President signed, legislation authorizing Coltville National Historical Park in

Hartford, Connecticut. The new park encompasses key historic elements of Coltville, the industrial village built by Sam and Elizabeth Colt in Hartford to fabricate firearms. This includes the Colt Armory, Good Shepherd Church and Parish House, many examples of worker and supervisor housing, the Colt family mansion Armsmead,

Colt Park (formerly the Colt estate) and the Sam Colt Memorial. The Legislation creating Coltville National Historical Park lays out a series of "Conditions for Establishment" that must be accomplished before the Secretary of Interior can formally establish the park. Essentially, there are a series of agreements that must be negotiated and signed. Once



Coltville Dome Photo: Karen O'Maxfield

established this new park will join the Springfield Armory as national parks highlighting the role of the Connecticut River Valley in the American Industrial Revolution.



Armory Worker Reunion

Join us for a reunion of Armory workers on July 9, 2016. We will honor those who worked at the Springfield Armory, along with their family and friends. There will be good food, shared memories, areas to collect oral histories of Armory workers, and tours of the



site. The climax of the event will be our annual Big Band concert. If you know an interested

Armory worker or want more information please contact the Springfield Armory at (413) 734-8551.

100 Years of National Parks

On August 25, 1916, the signing of the "Organic Act" created the National Park Service. 2016 is the year to celebrate the NPS Centennial. To commemorate this event, Springfield Armory will create a special National Park Service Centennial Exhibit that will open in March, 2016.

Today, there are over 409 National Park sites and the Springfield Armory can connect its history to most National Park units. This NPS Centennial Exhibit will highlight these connections by displaying objects and telling stories related to the creation and growth of our system of national parks. This exhibit will display historic weapons related to battlefield, presidential history, industrialization and manufacturing, the early days of the National Park Service and illustrate the importance of protecting these places and celebrating "America's Best Idea".

Harry Yount - First National Park Service Ranger



Springfield Armory National Historic Site

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